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KERRIA JAPONICA NAMED 'FUBUKI NISHIKI'

5 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of *Kerria japonica* (L.) DC [*Corchorus japonicus* Thunb.], which was discovered as a branch sport from the species *Kerria japonica* in Saitama Prefecture, Japan. The varietal denomination of the new variety is 'FUBUKI NISHIKI'.

The genus *Kerria* is included in the family *Rosaceae*, which comprises about 100 genera and 2,000 species of herbs, shrubs and trees native mostly to China and Japan. *Kerria* comprises one species, *Kerria japonica* (L.) DC, native to the temperate regions of eastern Asia, which possesses desirable ornamental characteristics.

Kerria japonica is a deciduous shrub with Green leaves and glabrous branches. Leaves of the typical species are alternate, oval, long acuminate, serrated on the margins with pinnate venation. It generally has Yellow flowers.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The new variety was discovered as a branch sport and differs from its parent by white flecked variegated foliage and White and Creamy striped flowers. Asexual reproduction of the new variety by vegetative cuttings, performed in Lewisberry, Pennsylvania and Vacaville, California have confirmed that the distinctive characteristics of the new variety are stable and transmitted to succeeding generations, and the new variety reproduces true to type.

COMPARISON WITH PARENTS

'FUBUKI NISHIKI' is distinguished from its parent and all other varieties of *Kerria japonica* of which I am aware by White

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flecked variegated foliage and White and Creamy marked flowers.
The parent plant has completely Green foliage and Yellow flowers.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

5 'FUBUKI NISHIKI' has not been observed under all possible environmental, cultural and light conditions. The following observations and descriptions are of plants grown in Vacaville, California and Lewisberry, Pennsylvania. In this description, color references are to *The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart* (1995) and terminology used in the color descriptions herein refers to plate numbers in this color chart. Phenotypic expression may vary with light intensity, cultural and environmental conditions.

15 BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION

Kerria japonica (L.) DC. [*Corchorus japonicus* Thunb.]

Parentage: Branch sport from the species

Propagation: Stem cuttings

20 PLANT

Size: About 2 m tall; about 3 m across

Habit: Upright; multi-branched shrub when young, becoming spreading with age

25 Branching

Lateral Branches: Numerous, obliquely upright becoming pendant with age

Typical Branch Number: More than 300

30 Observed Branch Number: 125

Size

Length: About 2 m long

Diameter: Between 4 to 5 mm

35 Color

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New Shoots: Green Group, near 139C

5 Mature Branches: Green Group, near 139C

LEAF

10 Shape: Ovate to oblong; leaf tip long;
acuminate occasionally hooked;
leaf base mostly cuneate to
obtuse and occasionally cordate
or truncate

Size: Between 9 to 10 cm long and about
5 cm wide

Arrangement: Alternate

15 Margin: Coarsely and irregularly doubly
serrate

Texture/Substance: Thin, chartaceous

20 Upper Surface: Glabrous with impressed veins,
nearly bullate

Under Side: Glabrous to slightly pubescent
with prominent veins

COLOR

25 The following Color Readings are of specimens grown in
Vacaville, California, USA and Lewisberry, Pennsylvania, 2 year
old specimen in 5 gallon containers.

VARIATION PATTERN

30 Flecked, splashed, and mottled in a random pattern. Areas
of variegation are frequently long and narrow, parallel to the
side veins of the leaf. There are additional smaller areas of
variegation that show no consistent shape and are randomly
distributed across the leaf. The variegation typically covers
25% to 50% of the leaf surface. Although the pattern of
variegation is random, every leaf displays noticeable patterns

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of variegation. Foliage holds the initial variegation from emergence through the growing season.

5 Young Foliage

Green Sections

Upper Side: Green Group, near 143A

Under Side: Green Group, near 143B

10 Variegated Sections

Upper Side: Greyed-Green Group, near 196C
and 196D and White Group, near
155B

Under Side: Greyed-Green Group, near 196D

15 Mature Foliage

Green Sections

Upper Side: Green Group, near 143A

Under Side: Green Group, near 143B

20 Variegated Sections

Upper Side: Greyed-Green Group, near 196C and
196D and White Group, near 155B

Under Side: Greyed-Green Group, near 196D

25 Venation Pattern: Alternately pinnate depressed
above, raised beneath

Petiole

Size: Between 0.5 to 1.5 cm

Coloration: Green Group, near 143A

30 Texture: Smooth

Internodes: Between 1 to 8 cm

Hardiness: USDA Zone 4 (-30°F to -20°F)

Vigor: Rapid growth rate

35 Pests/Diseases: No pest or disease problems noted

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INFLORESCENCE

5 Bloom Period
Outdoors: March to May
Greenhouse: Not observed in greenhouse conditions

10 Flower: Rotate
Arrangement: Solitary, terminal on lateral branchlets
Size: About 3.5 cm wide
Inflorescence shape: Solitary, terminal on lateral branchlets

15 Fragrance: None noted
Lastingness of individual blooms: Between 3 to 5 days
Petalage

20 Number: About 5
Shape: Ovate
Apex: Retuse occasionally apiculate
Base: Abruptly attenuate

25 Size: About 16 mm long; about 7 mm wide
Margin: Entire and smooth, often undulate
Curvature: Slightly inwardly cupped
Arrangement: Rotate
Color

30 Ground color: Yellow-Orange Group, near 145B

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5 Variegated section: Greyed-Green Group, near 196C-D
with occasional Yellow-Orange
Group, near 11B; occasional
random markings or stripes
parallel to the long axis of the
petal, occasional marginal
variegation

10 Sepals: Pointed, with some striped
variegation

REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

Androecium

15 Stamens: Between 30-40

Anther

Shape: Club shaped

Color: Yellow-Orange Group, near 11B

20 Pollen amount: Numerous

Color: Yellow-Orange Group, near 11B

Gynoecium

Pistil count: About 5

Length: About 2 mm

25 Stigma Color: Yellow-Orange Group, near 11B

Style Color: Yellow-Orange Group, near 11B

Ovary Color: Yellow-Orange Group, near 11B

Fruit Type: Achene

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